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THE
RIVAL WIVES.

Or, the GREETING of

CLARISSA to SKIRRA

IN THE

ELYSIAN SHADES.

HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE.



LONDON:

Printed for W. LLOYD in Chancery-Lane, and sold by the Book-
fellers of London and Westminster. 1738.

(Price One Shilling.)

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OF THE GREENING

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THE RIVAL WIVES.

CARCE had the Ghosts of *Pluto's* gloomy Shade
Lull'd the loud Storm *Clarissa's* Coming made;
The roaring *Styx* was just grown calm again,
And Mirth possess'd the wide *Tartarean* Plain;
When lo! a second Noise invades their Ears,
And louder Tumults shape their growing Fears,
Strait a huge *Dæmon*, in a hollow Sound,
Proclaims th' unwelcome baneful News around;
“ Prepare, ye Slaves! he cries, your Queen to meet;
“ Fam'd *SKIRRA* comes! ye d---d her Presence greet!
Through all the vaulted Domes the Message flies,
They reach e'en *Pluto's* Mansion with their Cries.

So when to *Tothill*, or to *Clerkenwell*,
Some Nymph is sent, for Crimes too vile to tell;
If with lac'd Cap, or silken Gown she's blest,
Due Reverence she claims from all the rest;
A more than usual Noise the Dungeon rends,
Which louder still from Cell to Cell descends:
The Keeper cries, “ Make room for *Madam* there;
While all the hungry, starving Wretches stare.

In a lone Shade, with deadly Henbane spread,
Clarissa drooping hangs her shameful Head;
 When *SKIRRA*'s Name she hears, malicious Smiles
 Rise in her Face, and all her Bosom boils;
 Revenge! my Soul, she cries, my Rival's come ---
 This, since she shares it, is no dreadful Doom;
 But yet there wants one *Shadow* more than this,
 A *THIRD* still greater, --- That would make it Bliss:
 Ha! there she glides! perfidious Shade, yet stay!
 And hear what Rage and Vengeance bid me say.

Wrong'd as I was, in Person and in Fame,
 I'll now the Cause of all my Wrongs proclaim:
 If trifling Errors to my Share did fall,
 'Twas some Excuse, you, Monster! caus'd them all.
 By fond Affection mov'd, I met my Lord,
 Chear'd by his Look, obedient to his Word;
 The nuptial Tie cou'd ne'er two Hearts unite,
 More form'd for mutual Transport and Delight:
 Swift wing'd with Love, the Moments gayly flew,
 Each Bliss, though oft repeated, still was new;
 Love's fragrant Blossom, opening to the Sun,
 'Till thou, curst Sorc'refs! like a Blight came on:
 'Twas then my *BUFO*, flighting all his Vows,
 The Marriage Band, the tender Name of Spouse,
 First from the menial Herd selected Thee,
 To raise Thee high at once to ruin Me:

What

What Beauties had'st thou? what prevailing Charms
 Could thou e'er boast, to draw him to thy Arms?
 No Birth, no Titles grac'd thee, mean, and low,
 Thy Blood in vulgar Channels wont to flow.
 Awhile, unknowing of the fatal Guile,
 I innocently met him with a Smile;
 O had the Secret still been kept unknown,
 I had been happy ---- I'd been wrong'd alone;
 But busy Tongues convey'd it to my Ears,
 And too-sufficient Proofs confirm'd my Fears:
 Instead of Poverty, and humble State,
 I saw an Equipage around thee wait;
 And found too late that thou by Pride wert grown
 The Scorn and Envy of the cens'ring Town.
 Mad to be thus despis'd, ---- frantick and wild,
 Of Honour's Ties, and Reason's Guide beguil'd,
 I flew for my Revenge, alas! to what?
 All Sense of Virtue, Shame, and Friends forgot,
 Enrag'd at him, my own Destruction sought.
 While secret Pleasure and exulting Pride
 Taught thee my little Failings to deride.
 Plung'd in a Sea of Vice, I waded through,
 And all the Plea I had was --- Monster! --- you.
 Tho' banish'd from his Bed, yet still I strove
 By various Services to gain his Love:
 While you in Riot, void of Sense or Shame,
 Still shar'd his Passion by a shocking Name.

'Twas said, and vulgar Tongues soon spread it round,
 If not with Charms, you did with Sense abound;
 That strict Discretion, 'bove the reach of Man,
 Taught You the Politician's Thoughts to scan;
 Hence he his Councils form'd, and every Scheme
 Ow'd its Prodigious Birth to You, not Him:
 As Conjurers of old had Spirits wait,
 Who, all that chanc'd, would to their Lords relate:
 Hence You and He alike were blam'd or prais'd,
 As the unthinking Multitude were pleas'd.
 That fatal Day's Mishap you needs must know,
 When his GREAT SCHEME of all receiv'd a Blow;
 The Mob enrag'd, a hapless Female tore
 Forth from her Coach, and that was You they swore;
 Their well-tim'd Rage, had they but guess'd aright,
 Had ended all my Pains and Fears that Night.
 To see You thus exalted, high in Power,
 And I forlorn, yet even this I bore;
 The World, by Fortune blinded, made their Court
 To You, who'd lately been their Game and Sport.
 Hence view the vain Delusions of Mankind,
 How Riches dazzle, and how Titles blind!
 If *Great*, ne'er stick at Vice—Who dare defame?
 The vicious *Poor* alone can merit Shame.
 L—ds with Impunity each Moment cheat,
 For what low petty Rogues their Fate would meet;
 And what our Ancestors would deem a *Crime*,
 Is grown a *Virtue* by the Course of Time.

Men now may *Keep* ; their Ladies Freedoms take ;
 Each Knight his Whore, each Lady has her Rake ;
 Scandal and Spleen in vain their Venom spit,
 To be gallant and lewd is tip-top Wit.
 Like *Rubra*, or like *You*, they scorn to wed,
 Yet boast the Shame of a polluted Bed ;
 Think Vice is poor, unless 'tis publick shewn,
 And lead their *Bastard Offspring* through the Town.

This I endur'd, no Recompence I fought,
 Resign'd entirely up to Care and Thought ;
 For this the tributary Shore I drain'd,
 And half the Riches of the Sea distrain'd :
 All Nature did the wondrous Work impart,
 And straight the *Grotto* rose, compleat in Art :
 O blisful Scenes! I could not then divine,
 That for so foul a Gem I form'd that Shrine ;
 I sunk at last oppress'd with Shame and Grief,
 Glad to resign the poor Remains of Life :
 One last Farewel I ask'd, the sad Request
 Rais'd fresh Emotions in my troubled Breast ;
 Conscious how much your Pow'r prevail'd : This Boon,
 Cried I, this Favour I entreat alone ;
 " Since Fate thus severs our united Hands,
 " You never more would join in nuptial Bands :
 By all our first fond Loves, I urg'd my Pray'r,
 And begg'd the *Dear Inconstant* he would swear.

So thrive I, said he, in whate'er I do,
 As now I keep this Promise made to you;
 Ne'er shall these Hands again receive a Mate,
 Ne'er will I enter on the Marriage State:
 Perfidious Wretch! how well thou'lt kept thy Vows,
 SKIRRA, deceitful, cunning SKIRRA knows:
 Pleas'd with his Promise, I resign'd my Breath,
 And yielded to the frozen Arms of Death.
 Scarce had the Earth entomb'd my sad Remains,
 And freed me from the Dread of earthly Pains;
 The starting Tear wip'd from the Mourner's Eye,
 Though feign'd, and forc'd, was yet but scarcely dry,
 When! Shame to tell! with all the Fire of Youth,
 Forgetting me, and Constancy and Truth;
 'Spite of a sneering World, whose envious Smiles
 Exulted now at all his artful Wiles,
 He *Wedded* thee, and the same Vows he swore,
 Renew'd to thee, he'd gave to me before.
 What *Charms*, what *Arts*, what *Cunning* couldst thou use,
 To draw so *Wise a Man* to such a Noose?
 I've heard, by *Drugs*, too strong to be withstood,
 Women have oft bewitch'd Man's roving Blood:
 Could'st thou do this? ---- What *Drugs*, what *Charms*
 have Pow'r
 To give fresh Youth to feeble dull *Fourscore*?
 The aged Letchers at some Face that's new,
 Whene'er some blooming Beauty come's in View,

Feel sudden Pains, Desires that once could move,
Tormented, tho' not pleas'd, with *Qualms* of Love.

But who in Fancy dull, first keeps a Miss,
Ugly, not form'd to give Delight or Bliss;
Who for whole Years retains th' imperious Dame,
Bully'd, not *charm'd* into an am'rous Flame:
Should he, to stop the World in Censure bold,
Make her his Wife, when impotent and old,
Would not Mankind agree in general Votes,
He's *mad*, or else in *second Childhood* doats?
Where was the *Gout*? Why ceas'd the *Gravel's* Rage?
Or did thy Eloquence his Pains assuage?

O envy not, ye Fair! the Men their Sex,
Whom thousand Cares, and thousand Ills perplex,
Nor think them blest, 'cause they may freely rove
Unbounded through the Labyrinths of Love.
Rove not we freely, when in high Disdain
Of Virtue's Struggles, or of Honour's Stain,
The Man we love we take, whole Years enjoy,
Nor Censure, Care, nor Scandal, can annoy;
Since in the End the mystic *Priest* bestows
The very *Virtue* we at first did lose?

Fix'd in these dark Abodes I felt no Rest,
But one continual Canker gnaw'd my Breast;

Still

Still for his Good my Heart with Ardour glow'd,
 And this false Step in friendly Dreams I shew'd:
 At midnight Hours from my dark Cavern freed,
 I travers'd all the busy Town with Speed,
 To know their diff'rent Judgments on this Deed.
 His Friends (tho' few they were) with o'ercast Brows,
 A discontented Sorrow did disclose;
 None could with Smiles approve, howe'er polite;
 No *Gazetteer* a Compliment could write.
 While pleas'd, the *Courtier* smiles, the *Farmer* sings,
 This to their Cause, they think, new Comfort brings;
 The chearful Merchant fills his flowing Bowl,
 And with new Transports elevates his Soul:
 While each agrees to join the gen'ral Voice,
 That he has shew'd his Folly in this Choice;
 Hence did they sit prefaging o'er their Wine
 His *Judgment's* Failure, and his quick *Decline*.

Next to the fatal Scene my Spirit hy'd,
 And saw thee deck'd, new-made an *honest Bride*;
 While on thy Heart a little *Dæmon* fate,
 Swell'd with Ambition, and with Pride elate.
 The Bed was deck'd with all the Pomp of Love,
 And seem'd the Image of the *Idalian Grove*.
 He, like *Adonis* drest, limp'd on behind,
 Age in *Limbs*, though *Youth* was in his *Mind*.
 On the soft Scene, enrag'd, I saw you laid,
 With no fierce Joys your Slumbers to invade.

Next Morn the *Levee*'s Farce with Smiles I view'd,
 Through various antick Characters purfu'd :
 A Reverend Lawn with Scrapes his Homage pays,
 Though Conscience gives the Lye to all he says.
 One strait finds out you're born of noble Birth,
 And that your Beauty charms all Men on Earth :
 While in your Anti-chamber humbly wait
 Ladies of Rank, Condition, and Estate.
 All Scandal silenc'd ; rich and virtuous grown,
 You claim a Rank now equal to their own.
 So much can Fortune dazzle in this Case,
 That on a *Post* or *Log* a *Ribbon* place,
 The Mob revere, and strait it shines HIS GRACE.
 And ev'ry Wench pick'd from the servile Croud,
 If by some Man of Quality avow'd,
 Is dubb'd *My Lady* ; and each Wretch before
 That shunn'd her Sight, and shov'd her from his Door ;
 Now cringing humbly at each Motion bends,
 For Favours sue, and on her Smiles depends :
 We've lost the ancient Virtue of our Sires,
 'Tis not intrinsic Worth the World admires ;
 Nonsense and Noise can now alone engage,
 Assurance, Titles, Drefs, and Equipage.

Then sunk ingloriously in Sloth and Ease,
 Like *Anthony* he liv'd, but You to please ;
 The World neglected was, and *Britain* mourn'd,
 Until her St--tesm--n's Senses were return'd :

Unhappy He! whole Days to give to You,
 Who nobler Trophies should have had in View.
St. J--n in State Affairs the Mark could hit,
 And temper *Politicks* with *Love* and *Wit*:
 From that *soft Desk*, wou'd fire the Hermit's Soul,
 He sent Dispatches round from Pole to Pole.
 Would *Fl-ry* for the *Mistress of his Heart*
 One Moment from the *Cabinet* depart?
 Or would *Le Quadra* chuse the *Am'rous Scene*?
 Though he had nought to do but hear poor *K--*
 These while their Country bleeds, all scorn to *sleep*,
 Yet You your *Hero* in fond Dalliance keep:
 Debas'd, he cry'd, let who will *rule the Main*,
 I for this Kiss would give up all to *S---n*.

More *brilliant* next at *C--t* I saw you shine,
 Where all the Flatt'ers in your Praises join,
 Ten thousand spreading Scandals me defame,
 Each Prude takes Pleasure to revile my Name;
 While you triumphant on my Ruins rise,
 And gild your Vices with the rich Disguise.
 Amaz'd, confounded, to my Shades I flew,
 Unable to sustain another View:
 This only Comfort eas'd my anxious Pain,
 I knew your Transports could not long remain.
 But as for me, why should the busy Tongues,
 Unmov'd, repeat my Errors, not my Wrongs?

Whom

Whom have I hurt ?---What envious Wretch can say,
The Poor from me, un pity'd, went away ?

The low, distress'd, in me still found a *Friend*,

And all that on my Bounty did depend.

No Pride, no Ostentation, spoil'd my Boon,

The Benefit bestow'd, forgot as soon.

Say, when with Affluence blest, couldst thou e'er boast

Any that met Assistance at thy Cost ?

Still from thy Door the Poor and Needy fled,

Nor fought the Hungry, there, their daily Bread :

Yet Calumny and Shame my Mem'ry wait

For Errors known too well, and found too late.

Vice, if successful, loses strait its Name ;

If unsuccessful, meets with certain Shame.

Yet let the partial World judge how it may,

Justice uncloses all one fatal Day ;

Bares the gall'd Conscience, and betrays its Guilt,

Pursues the Murd'rer for the Blood he's spilt.

In vain the Villain's hid in specious Forms,

Unerring Justice all his Fraud disarms,

Regards the gaudy *Robe* no more than Rags,

And damns the Miser with his hoarded Bags ;

Pulls Regal Pride, and stern Oppression, down,

And spoils the Tyrant of his ill-got Crown :

Till this sad Day here doom'd with me to rove,

And share the Horrors of this gloomy Grove.

You, SKIRRA ! as you once partook my State,

Shall now partake the Terrors of my Fate.

O!

O! how unlike the fond luxuriant Bliss,
 That Earth once gave thee, are the Pains of this!
 Instead of *R--hm--d* Bow'rs and verdant Scenes,
 Its rising Landscapes spread with Ever-greens;
 The blighted Cypress, Henbane, and the Yew,
 Invenom'd all, shall only meet your View!
 No Grotto's form'd for Transport, Love, and Joy,
 No downy Couch to meet the am'rous Boy;
 But gloomy Shades and Cells, which void of Light,
 Abound with dreary Phantoms of the Night:
 No purling Streams, like *Thames*, the Shores to lave,
 But black *Cocytus*' horrid roaring Wave;
 And still to make thy Torments more compleat,
 In various Shapes my Image shalt thou meet:
 Still bellowing in thy Ears, the cursed Cause
 That this impartial Vengeance on thee draws;
 Thy Crimes repeat, and in thy trembling Ears
 Proclaim my Wrongs, and so augment thy Fears.

Thus will I say, now *Trait'refs*, seek thy Lord,
 And try what Joy his Presence will afford!
 Where's now thy gay Delights, thy wanton Mirth?
 And all the Luxuries thou shar'dst on Earth?
 Now ravage *India*, and the Vassal Globe,
 And Nature of her choicest Sweets disrobe;
 In Spices, like the Eastern Bird, expire,
 And rise more lovely from the balmy Fire:

With

With richest Viands now thy Table spread,
 Richer than those on which fam'd *Nero* fed;
 Then drest in all th' Extravagance of Pride,
 Thy *fond old Husband* sitting by thy Side,
 Drink *Pearls dissolv'd*, the noblest thou can'st find,
 And riot on the *Plunder of Mankind*.

Thus in tormenting Accents (still thy Foe)
 My Words shall double all thy Scenes of Woe:
 From Shade to Shade I'll still pursue thy Ghost,
 Nor let one Moment of Despair be lost.
 Nay more, to give thee Pain, thou shalt behold
 The Wonders which the mystic Fates unfold;
 How from dark Causes Embrio Mischiefs rise,
 And fill th' admiring World with wild Surprise.
 How *Europe* blesses her indulgent *Star*,
 Boasts settled *Peace*, yet ev'ry State's at *War*.
 And when a flagrant Blunder I espy,
 "SKIRRA! thy Love occasion'd this," I'll cry.
 See where the once fam'd *Empress of the Main*,
 By *Pirates* robb'd, from Vengeance does refrain;
 Sees *Europe's Scum* defy her falling Pow'r
 Her ruling FLAG insulted, mock'd and tore;
 Lethargic Slumbers all her Spirits seize,
 And see, she sinks to Nothing by Degrees;
 Her Sons with Ardour burn, each Bosom glows,
 And would revenge the Insults of their Foes.

But close confin'd by Pow'r and awful Sway,
 Their Spirits sink, inactive, to decay;
 The *British* Lyons, quite degen'rate grown,
 See themselves robb'd, yet lie supinely down;
 From martial Camps and Fields their Youth retire
 To lulling Sounds, and female soft Desire;
 From the shrill *Trumpet's Clang*, the *Drum's loud Note*,
 They fly enraptur'd, to an Eunuch's Throat.
 'Twas not by such as these that *Britain* rose,
 And quell'd the most obdurate of their Foes.
 When the *Iberian*, o'er the trembling Main,
 Threaten'd our Land with all the Strength of *Spain*,
 ELIZA's Captains rous'd at once to Arms,
 And met undauntedly their rude Alarms.
 Had *Drake* or *Raleigh* then, as Heroes now,
 Dreaded a rough scarr'd Face, or wrinkled Brow;
 Or had they aim'd at nought but Dress and Ease,
 Where then had been the Empire of the Seas?
 Thus *Britain's* sunk in Sloth and Lux'ry drown'd,
 The *Scorn* and *Dupe* of all the Nations round;
 While haughty *Gaul* her growing Pow'r extends,
 To sov'reign Empire o'er Mankind pretends:
 Where'er she comes, Terror and Dread she brings,
 And gives contending Slaves her Vassal Kings.
 In Arts and Arms, supreme, she reigns alone,
 And makes each grand Discovery her own.
 How chang'd the Scene, in less than thrice ten Years,
 Her Monarch then shrunk drooping with his Fears;

Submissively

Submissively for *Peace* and Quiet fought,
 When *Marlbro'* check'd her, and when *Eugene* fought;
 Now see her rais'd in her Triumphal Car,
 To bending *Europe* dictate Peace or War;
 Nay, e'en the haughty *Porte* will condescend
 T' accept her Mediation as her Friend:
 But ruin'd *Corfica* finds to its Cost,
 That by her Friendship all its Rights are lost.
 Nor spreads she thus her Sway by Force of Arms,
 But by persuasive Guile, and wordy Charms;
 By Friendship's specious Lure th' Unwary draws;
 The Weak, by seeming to espouse her Cause:
 Thus she o'er All maintains unwonted State,
 As if sole Arbiter of *Europe's* Fate.
Fleury, this Honour's thine! To latest Days
 For this shall *France* record her Statesman's Praise;
 Their Offspring teach thy great Desert to own,
 And thy lov'd Bust with living Laurels crown:
 While *Britain*---but no more---now turn thy Eyes,
 Where Virtue blooms beneath black northern Skies;
 In *Russian* Climes see Glory rear her Head,
 And round the Universe her Triumphs spread.
 Thither the hardy Vet'ran, full of Scars,
 The Marks and Prize of many well-fought Wars,
 For Refuge flies; starv'd in his native Land,
 But there's rewarded with a lib'ral Hand:
 Cloy'd of inactive Life, there braves the Field,
 Glad in his aged Arm his Sword to wield.

The brave rough Sailor, who enur'd to Toil,
 Has oft enrich'd his Land with *India's* Spoil,
 Dar'd the harsh Wave, and triumph'd o'er the Main,
 Yet fought at home his due Regard in vain;
 There crown'd with Glory, and with Plenty blest,
 By all the World makes ANNA's Pow'r confest.

But see a Cloud o'er *Britain* breaks---The Scene
 Dreadfully looks, what can the Object mean?
*A Sov'reign's Anger---injur'd Subjects Hate---
 Plunder restor'd---Designs against the State---
 Cheats---Contracts---Bubbles---Pensions idly paid---
 Rich Cits---and sturdy Beggars---Loss of Trade---
 Georgia---Gibraltar---Treaties made to break,
 Threatnings---Impeachments---ill-got Wealth at Stake
 A Scaffold and an Axe of monstrous Size,
 At this sad Sight aghast each Shadow flies:
Skirra in vain evades *Clarissa's* Hate,
 She still pursues her swift as vengeful Fate;
 Yet both confess their Sentence is not hard,
 Knowing what Torment's for their Lord prepar'd.*

F I N I S.